

Natural Resources Commission Meeting

NRC Policy Committee on
Wildlife & Fisheries

March 13, 2014



Proposed Orders

- NRC – For Information
 - Field Dog Trials at Allegan State Game Area (WCO Amendment No. 3 of 2014)
 - Bear License Quotas (WCO Amendment No. 4 of 2014)
 - Elk Regulations and License Quotas (WCO Amendment No. 5 of 2014)



NRC Policy Committee on Wildlife and Fisheries

- Fisheries Division Update
- Wildlife Division Update
- Elk Regulations and Quotas
- Bear Hunting; Red Oak License Quota
- Bovine TB Disease Surveillance Report
- Surveys to measure support for antler-point restrictions in two areas in the Lower Peninsula
- 2012 Deer Hunter Opinion Survey





Fisheries Division Update

Department of Natural Resources

Jim Dexter, Chief
Fisheries Division
March 13, 2014



Fisheries Update



- Conversations and Coffee
 - 11 meetings
 - Regulation proposals
- B.A.S.S. Angler of the Year Tournament
 - Bays de Noc
- Upcoming Fishery Advisory meetings



Any Questions?

Department of Natural Resources

Thank You!



Wildlife Division Update



**Russ Mason, Chief
Wildlife Division
March 13, 2014**



Field Dog Trials at Allegan SGA

- Audit findings:
 - Conflicts with intended grant purposes habitat management and wildlife restoration
 - Mows trails, cuts wood, and trims brush or trees, adverse impact on nesting wildlife
- Allegan SGA:
 - Cease managing land for field dog trials
 - Remove field dog trial designation
 - Remove from field dog trial permitting process



Wildlife Habitat Grant Program

- *Purpose:* Provide funding to local, state, federal, and tribal units of government, profit or non-profit groups, and individuals to assist WLD with developing or improving game species habitat
- *Available Grant Funds FY2014:* ~\$650,000
 - Projects can occur on public or private lands
 - 44 applications received that met March 1 deadline
 - A total of \$1,950,000 has been requested
 - Awards are expected to be announced by the Director on April 1, 2014
 - The FY2015 RFP will come out this summer for projects that will take place Oct. 1, 2014 - Sept. 30, 2015



Events & Feedback

- Waterfowl USA
- Blue Water MDHA Banquet
- UPBHA Banquet
- Camp Liberty
- Ducks Unlimited
- Pheasants Forever
- And more!

*Positive feedback and
great encouragement!*



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/wildlife



Elk Regulations



Brent Rudolph, Deer and Elk Program Leader
Wildlife Division
March 13, 2014



Michigan Elk Population Status

- Objective: 500–900 elk
- Winter survey 2014: 668 elk (range: 443-891), low calf:cow
- Elk outside core: potential bTB crossover agricultural damage
 - Conflict reduction: DNR-initiated contacts, increasing hunting access

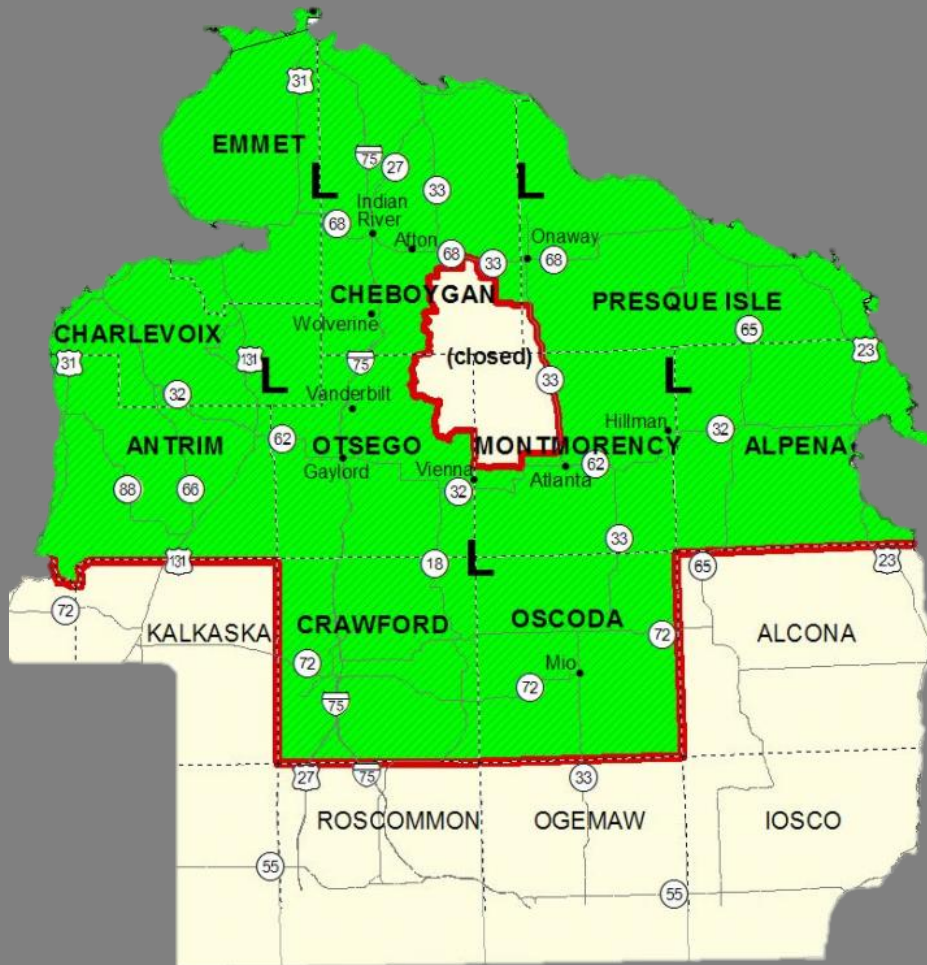


2014 & 2015 Proposed License Quotas

- 100 licenses (100 less than 2013)
- Expected harvest: 85 (plus tribal take and Pure Michigan Hunt)
- Expect stable or potential population reduction over 2014 and 2015 seasons



Season Dates and License Quotas



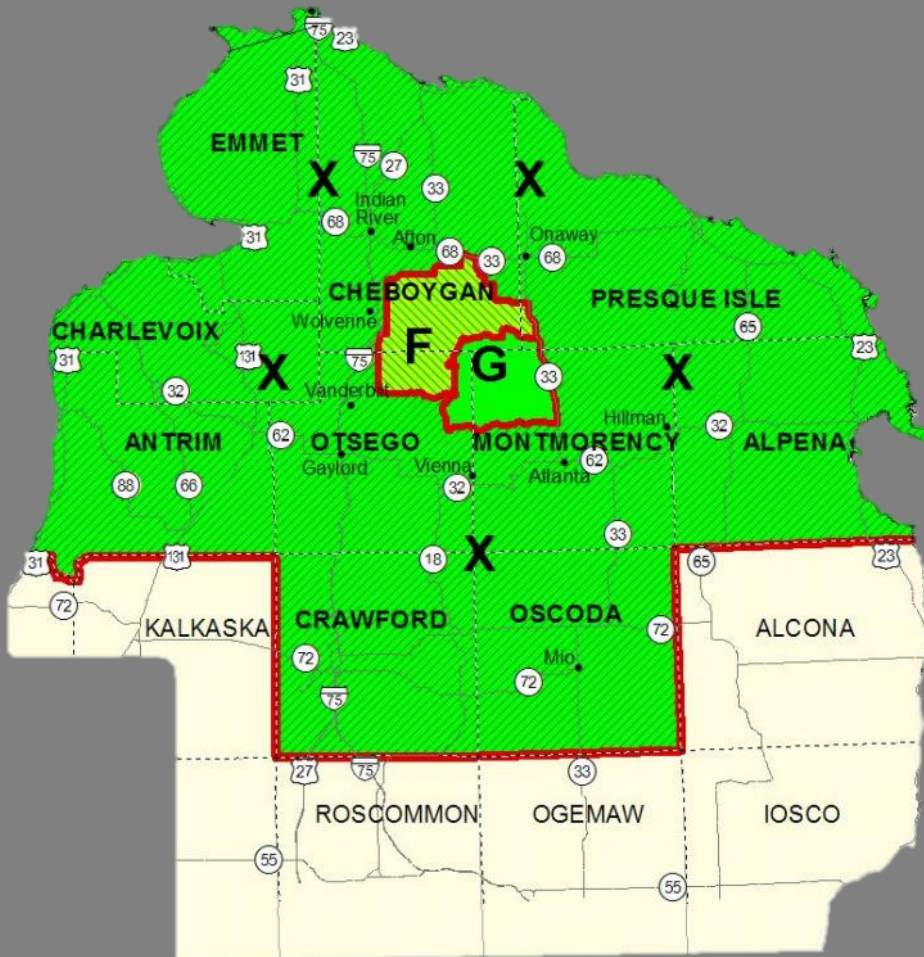
Hunt Period 1

Aug. 26 - 29, 2014	Aug. 25 - 28, 2015
Sept. 12 - 15, 2014	Sept. 11- 14, 2015
Sept. 26 - 29, 2014	Sept. 25 - 28, 2015

Unit	Any Elk	Antlerless
L	15	35



Season Dates and License Quotas



Hunt Period 2

Dec. 6 - 14, 2014

Dec. 5 - 13, 2015

Unit	Any Elk	Antlerless
F	5	15
G	10	20
Total	15	35



Season Dates and License Quotas

- OPTIONAL Hunt Period 3
 - January 14 – 18, 2015
 - January 13 – 17, 2016
- Maximum licenses: 40



Tribal Licenses

- The 2007 Inland Consent Decree authorizes the five 1836 Treaty Tribes to issue licenses equal to 10% of state issued elk licenses, rounded up.



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/elk



2013 Bear Harvest Update



Adam Bump, Bear and Furbearer Specialist
Wildlife Division
March 13, 2014



2012 and 2013 Bear Season Summary

- Approved Goals
 - West UP- Maintain 2012 population
 - East UP- Maintain 2012 population
 - NLP- Allow population to decline about 10% from 2012 levels before stabilizing
- No changes were recommended for 2013
 - “Pre-approved” drop from 835 to 750 licenses in Red Oak BMU



2013 Registration Results State Licensed Hunter Harvest

HUNT NAME	2012 REGISTRATION	2013 REGISTRATION	LICENSE QUOTA	LICENSE SUCCESS %
Bergland 1st	63	58	165	35
Bergland 2nd	74	93	370	25
Bergland 3rd	76	91	730	12
Baraga 1st	82	77	255	30
Baraga 2nd	96	96	470	20
Baraga 3rd	77	110	895	12
Amasa 1st	57	52	100	52
Amasa 2nd	53	55	150	37
Amasa 3rd	47	66	255	26
West UP Total	625	698	3390	21

2013 Registration Results

State Licensed Hunter Harvest

HUNT NAME	2012 REGISTRATION	2013 REGISTRATION	LICENSE QUOTA	LICENSE SUCCESS %
Carney 1st	36	37	115	32
Carney 2nd	57	39	225	17
Carney 3rd	45	26	475	5
Gwinn 1st	68	49	200	25
Gwinn 2nd	70	71	290	24
Gwinn 3rd	77	57	760	8
Newberry 1st	120	83	270	31
Newberry 2nd	128	92	360	26
Newberry 3rd	115	136	890	15
East UP	716	590	3585	16

2013 Registration Results

State Licensed Hunter Harvest

HUNT NAME	2012 REGISTRATION	2013 REGISTRATION	LICENSE QUOTA	LICENSE SUCCESS %
Drummond Island	1	1	1	100
Red Oak	256	216	750	29
Baldwin	31	43	70	61
Gladwin	17	13	110	12
NLP	304	272	930	29
Statewide Total	1646	1561	7906	20



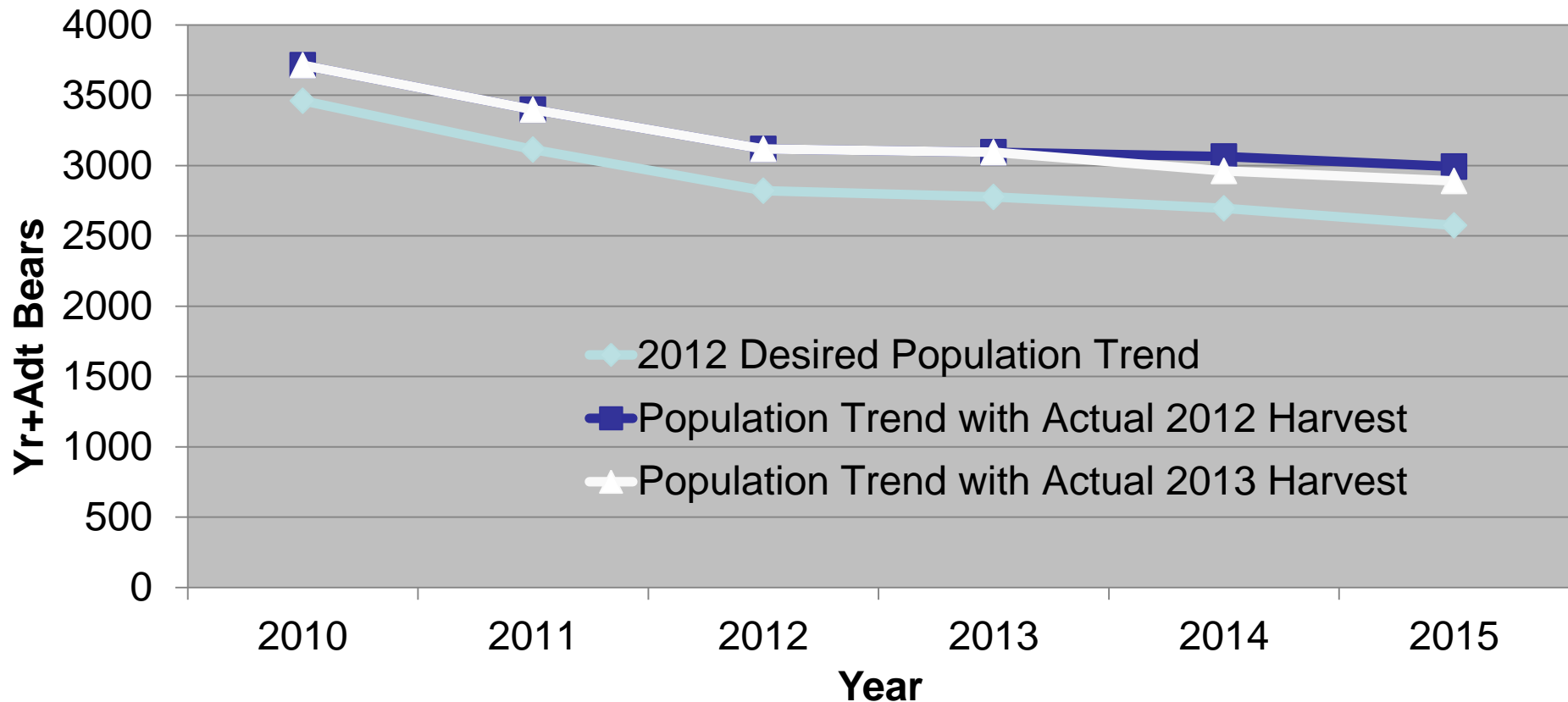
2012-2013 Comparison

- 10% reduction in Red Oak licenses
- Statewide success rate declined from 21% to 20%
- Statewide harvest 5% lower (85 bears)
- ~14% above state desired harvest (1,375)



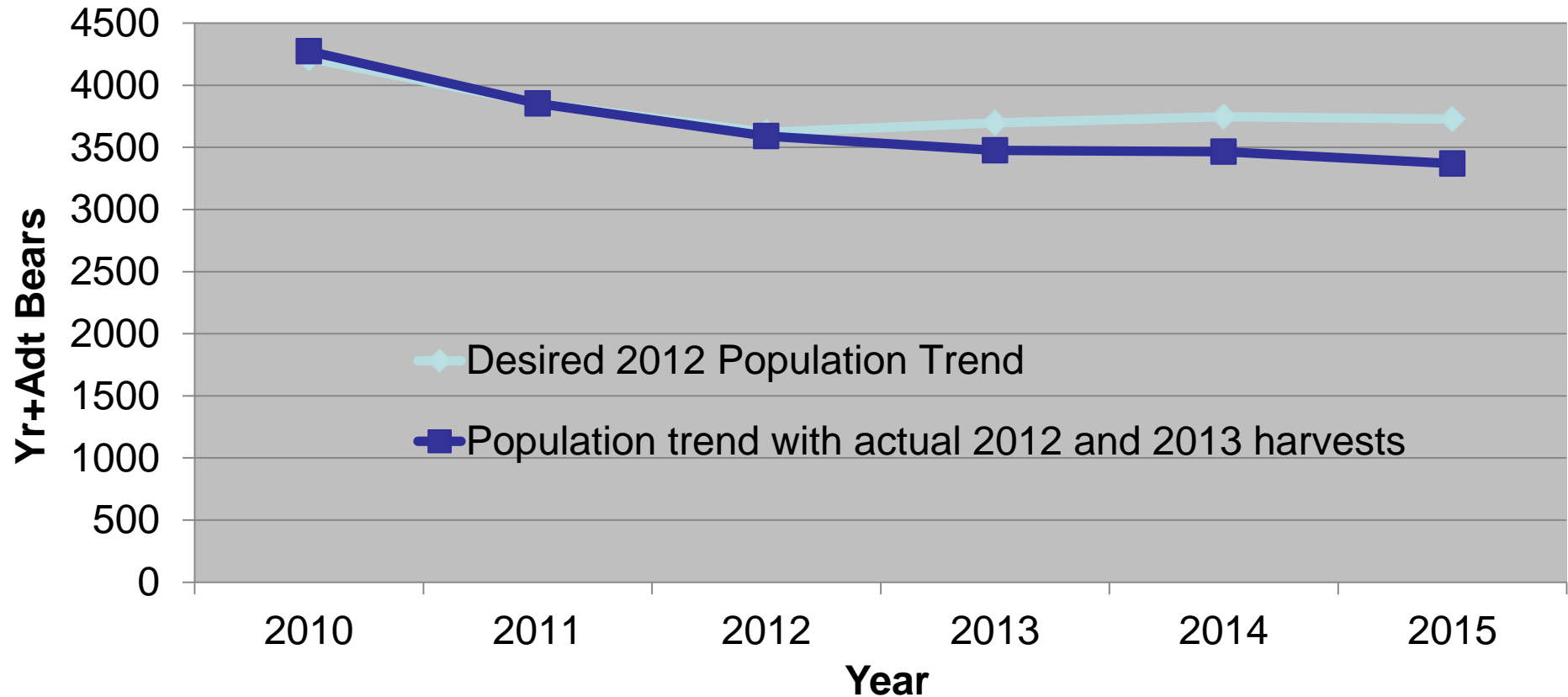
West UP Eco-Region

Simulation model results for WUP Yr + Adt bear population 2010-2015



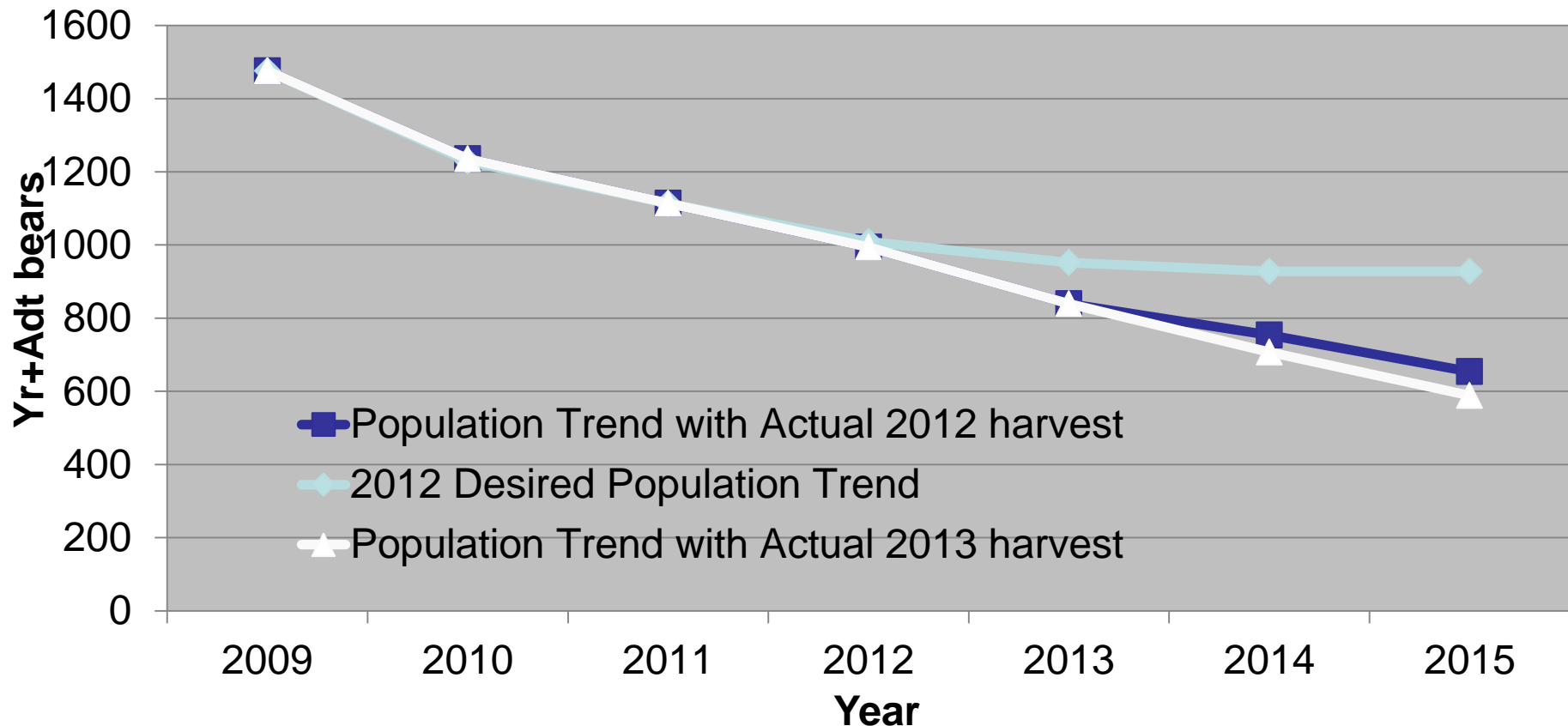
East UP Eco-Region

Simulation model results for the EUP Yr + Adt bear population 2010-2015

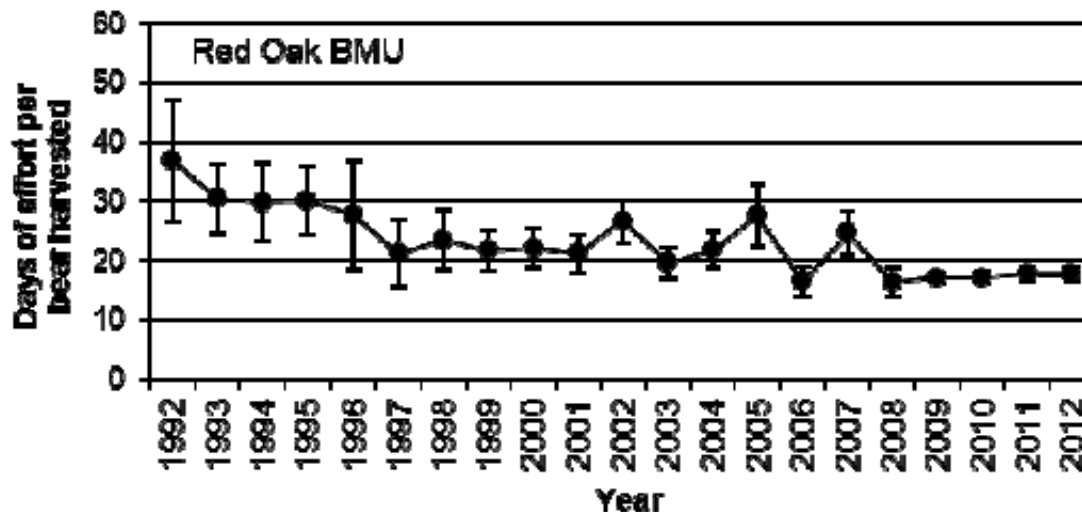
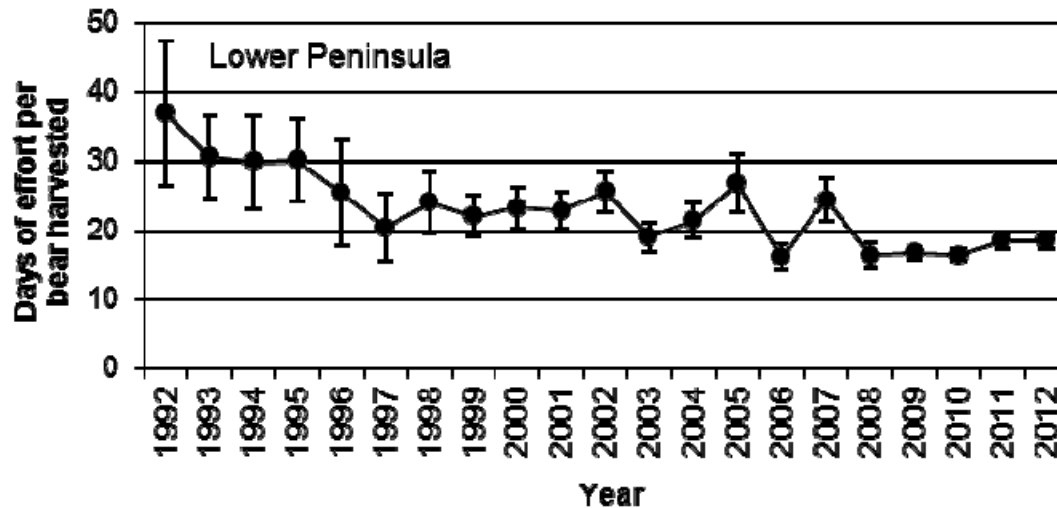


NLP Eco-Region

Simulation model results for NLP Yr + Adt bear population 2009-2015

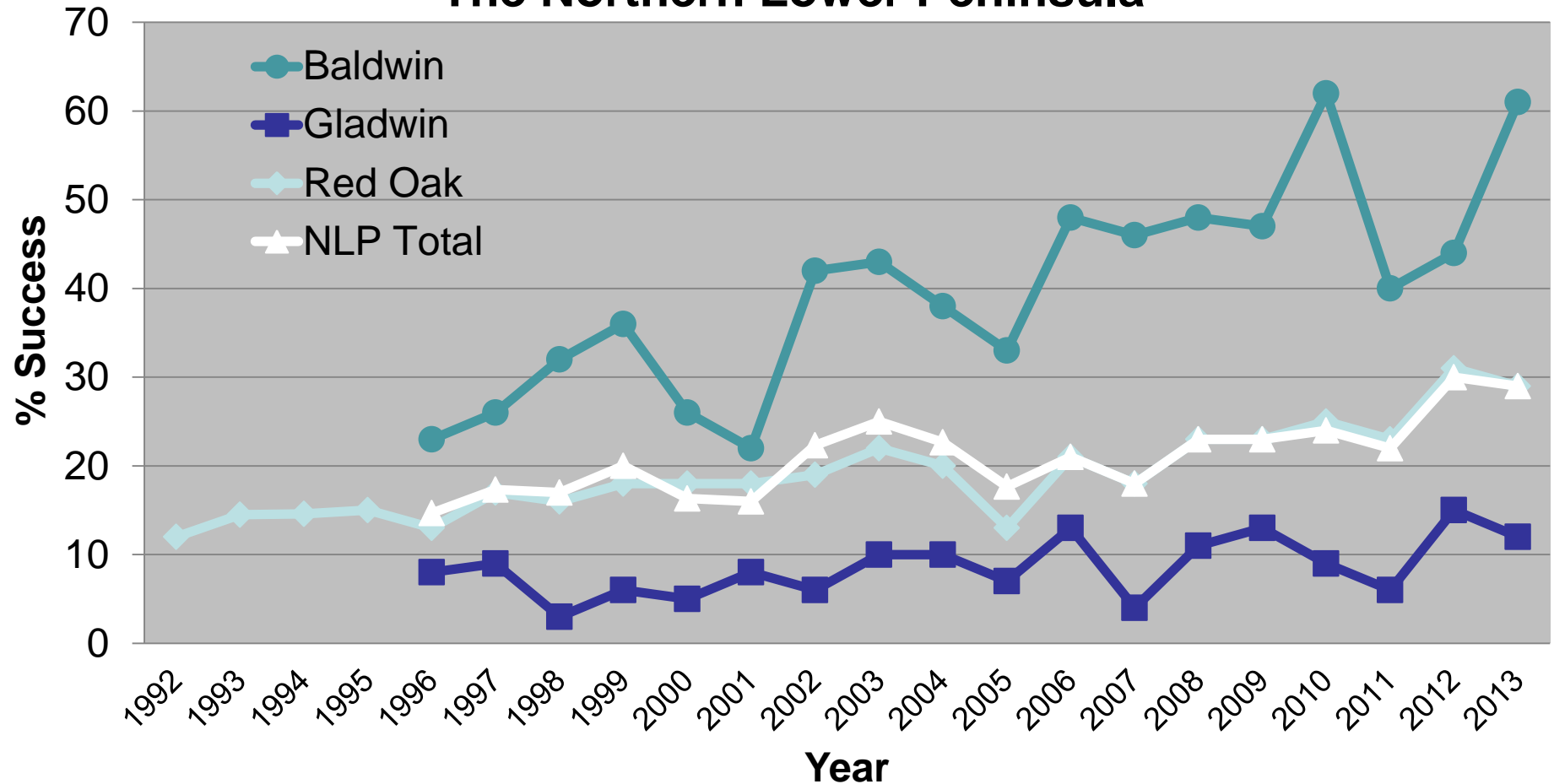


NLP Hunter Effort per Kill



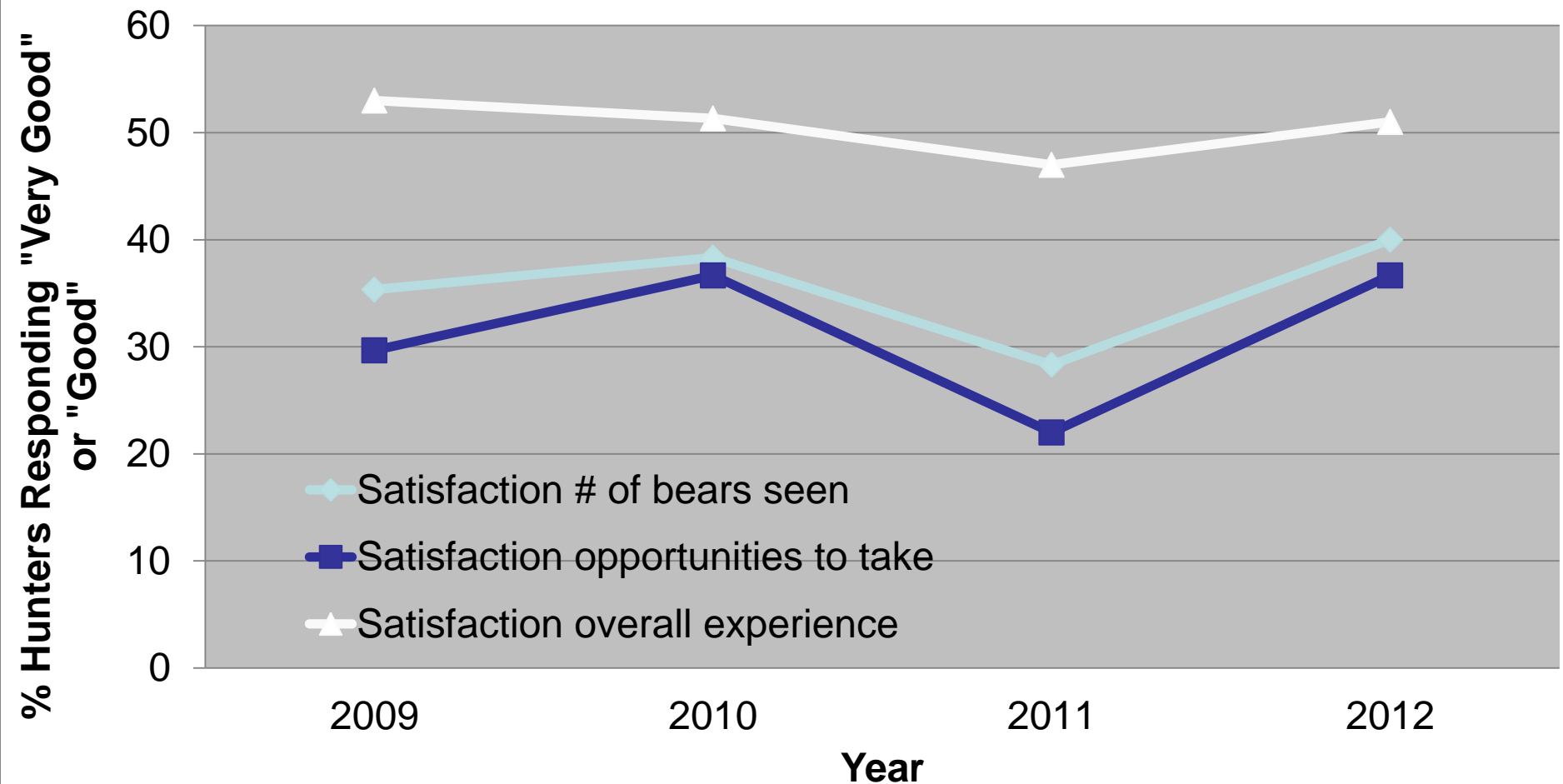
NLP Success Rates (1992-2013)

Bear Hunting Success Rates in The Northern Lower Peninsula



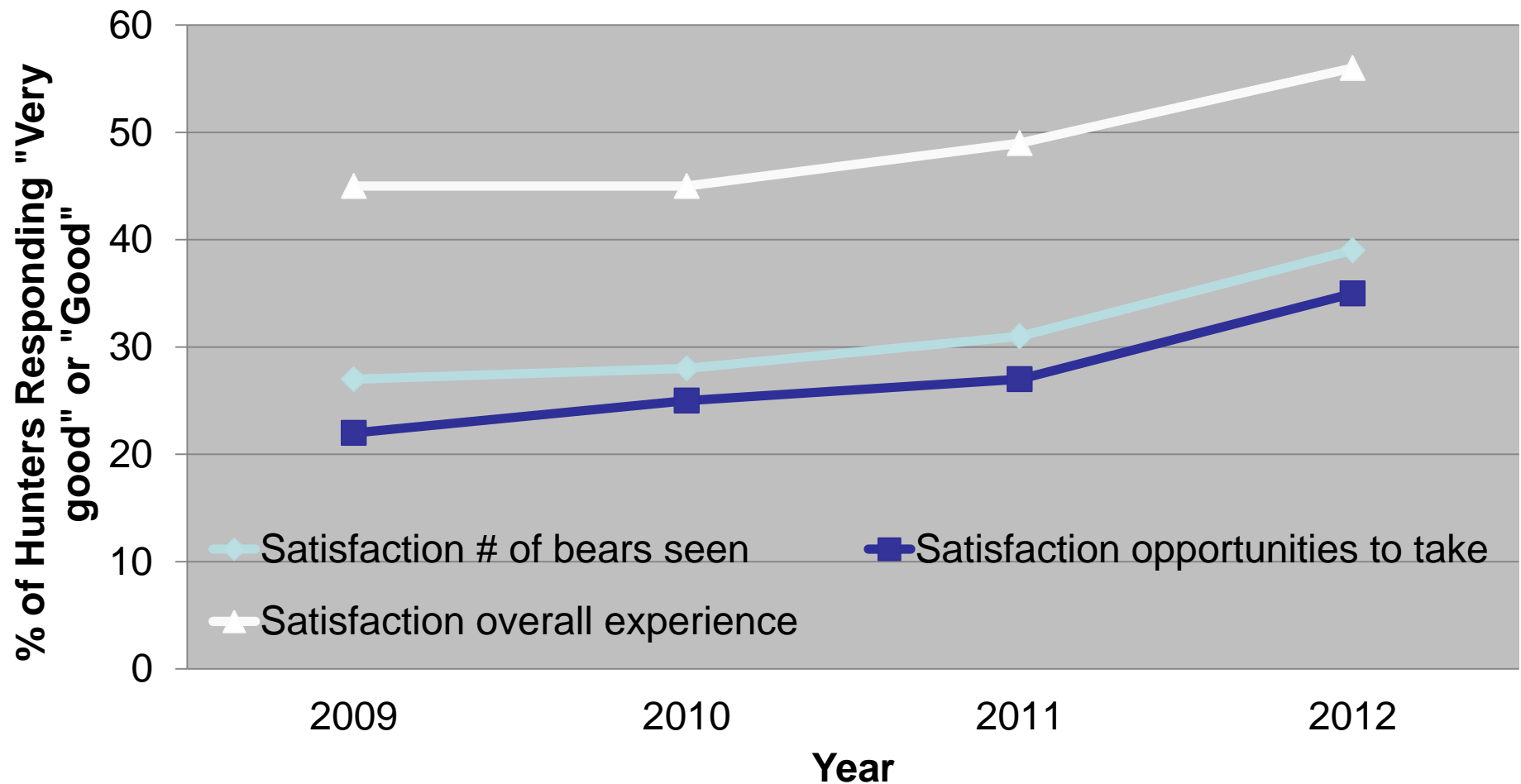
NLP Satisfaction Rates (1992-2013)

Hunter Satisfaction in the NLP



NLP Success Rates (1992-2013)

Hunter Satisfaction Red Oak BMU



New Information for 2015

- New genetic mark-recapture estimate expected in late 2014
- Anticipate statistical reconstruction estimator by late 2014
- Both will help inform discussions for NLP



External Engagement

- 2007 Inland Consent Decree
 - 1836 Treaty Tribes allocation
- Stakeholder Perceptions



2014 Bear Season Recommendations

- No changes to licenses from 2013
 - Exception: reduce Red Oak licenses from 750 to 675 licenses
 - Part of a long-term strategy implemented in 2012



Looking Forward

- Bear regulations up for review in 2015
 - Discuss and reset eco-regional population trend goals
 - Recommend new license quotas based on new trend goals and 3-year average success rates
 - Evaluate some potential regulation changes



Looking Forward

(Potential Discussion Items)

Regulatory

- Population issues (set eco-regional trend goals/license quotas
 - MBHA/MHDF/UPBHA- increase bear population
 - Concern of level of harvest
- Guiding regulations
 - Eliminate guiding
 - Develop way to spread guiding activity out- mitigate impacts of hunter density
 - Look at making the placement of commercial bear bait on CF lands illegal in WCO
 - Require guides to label baits and stands (guide liable for violations of use, not client)
- Baiting
 - Bait permits (pay fee to bait, mandatory tagging of bait sites) all types of bait, charge fee for id for bait permits
 - Start of legal baiting
 - Move to July 1
 - August 1
 - Don't change start of baiting period
 - Restrict/regulate the placement of bait not just use of bait
 - Require name/address on baits

Looking Forward

(Potential Discussion Items)

Regulatory

- Youth/apprentice hunters- harvest on all land not just private land
- Transfer of tag liberalized- easier to transfer to youth/senior citizen
- Bait/hound regulations
 - Alternate opening of bear season to allow hound and bait hunters to be first on alternate years
 - Address conflict between bait and hound hunters (several potential solutions proposed)
- Require hound hunters to possess a valid kill tag for the mgmt. unit in which they are hunting/training
- Evaluate BMU boundaries in at least the NLP
- Allow residents over “x” age to purchase a license with no preference points
- Start NLP season on Sept. 10
- There is an issue with sealing and processors/taxidermists. We need to clarify or change regulations pertaining to when (and what) needs to be sealed.
- Set standard date for having ground blinds and tree stands in woods- all species

Looking Forward (Potential Discussion Items)

- Statutory

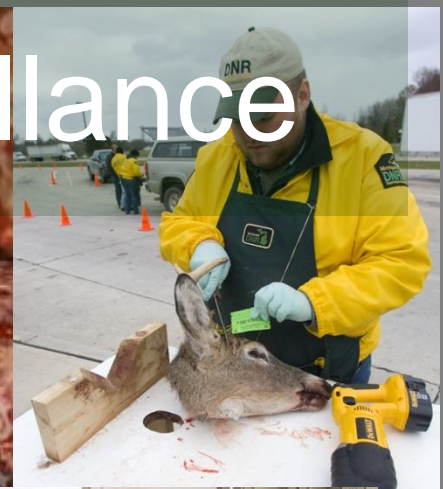
- Access to commercial forest lands for hunting/trapping (same for state lands)
- Access/road closures CF public
- Address recreational feeding of bears
- Legislation to control and limit commercial baiting

Thank You

www.michigan.gov/dnr



2013 Bovine TB Surveillance



Dr. Steve Schmitt
Dr. Dan O'Brien
Wildlife Health Section
Michigan Department of Natural Resources



M. Bovis in free-ranging WTD

- TB not native to N. American wildlife; introduced by cattle
- Rare, sporadic in wild deer
- Eight previous occurrences prior to the current outbreak
- Michigan is the first recorded self-sustaining North American outbreak in wild deer



Michigan White-tailed Deer Surveillance



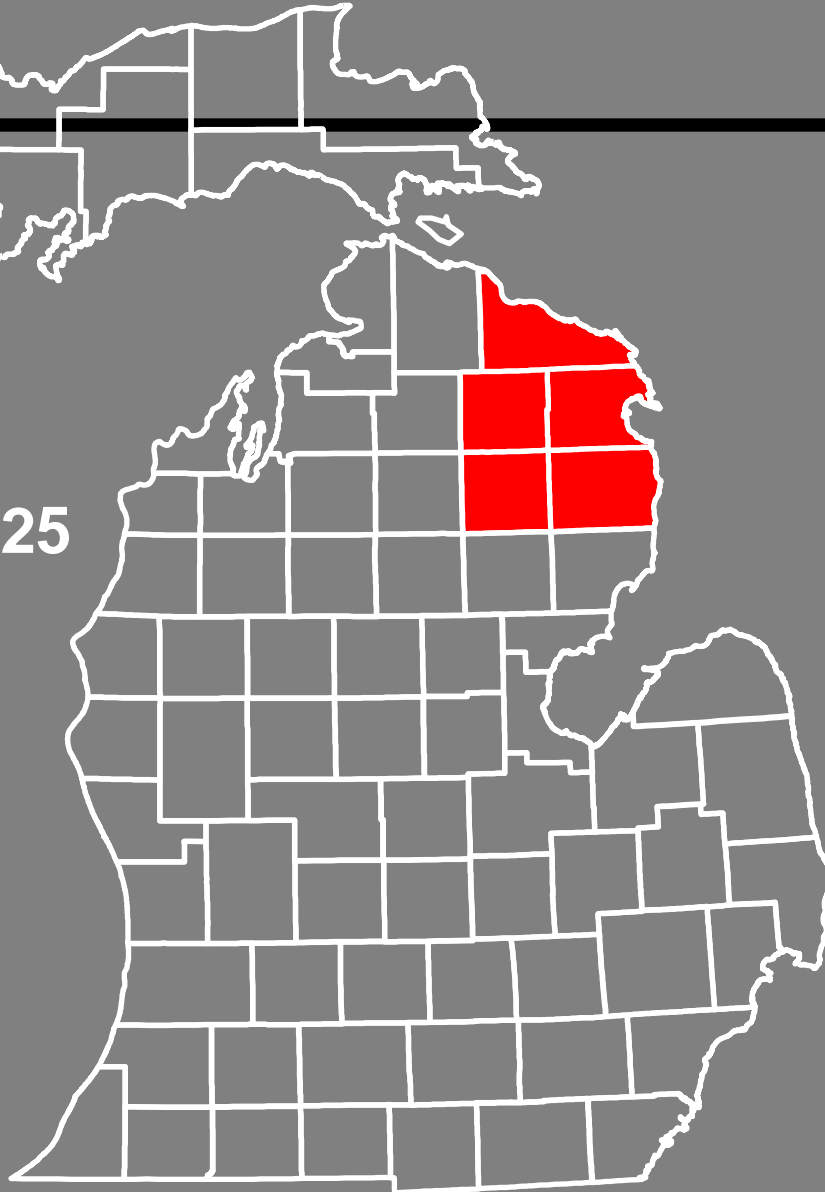
Year	Positive	Total Deer Tested
1975 & 1994	2	2
1995	18	403
1996	56	4,966
1997	73	3,720
1998	78	9,057
1999	58	19,499
2000	53	25,855
2001	61	24,278
2002	51	18,100
2003	32	17,307
2004	28	15,131
2005	16	7,364
2006	41	7,914
2007	27	8,316
2008	37	16,309
2009	31	5,723
2010	24	4,974
2011	17	6,026
2012	23	4,721
2013	21	5,868
2014	0	11
Grand Total	747	205,544



Bovine Tuberculosis Surveillance Areas

5 County Bovine TB Area: **725**

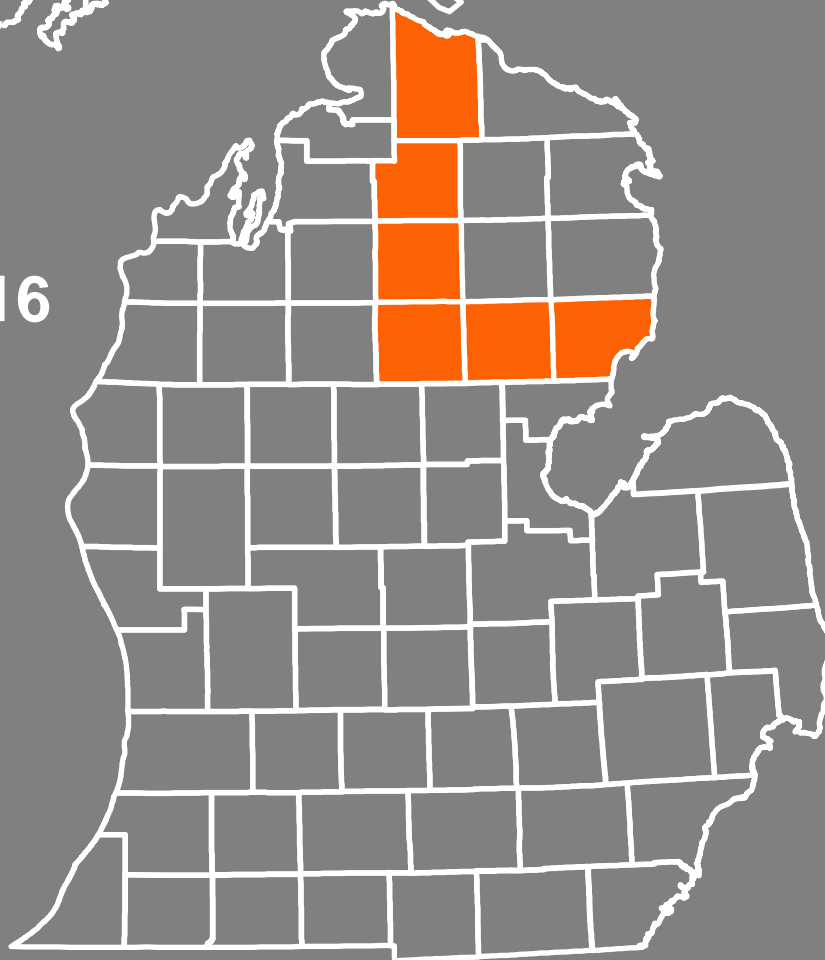
Alcona
Alpena
Montmorency
Oscoda
Presque Isle



Bovine Tuberculosis Surveillance Areas

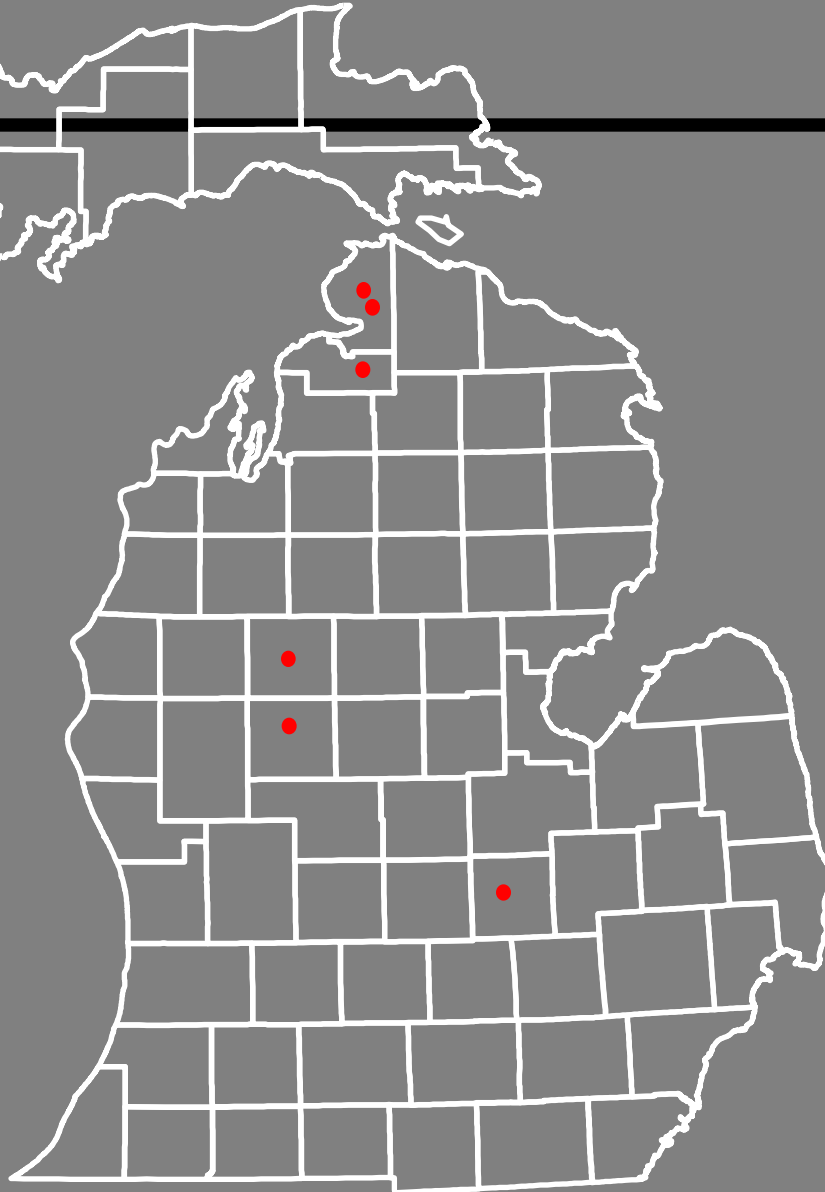
Surrounding Tier of Counties: **16**

Cheboygan
Crawford
Iosco
Ogemaw
Otsego
Roscommon



Bovine Tuberculosis Surveillance Areas

Other areas: 6
Antrim
Emmet (2)
Mecosta
Osceola
Shiawassee



2013 BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS SURVEILLANCE IN MICHIGAN'S FREE-RANGING WHITE-TAILED DEER

Legend



Deer Management
Unit 452



County Lines

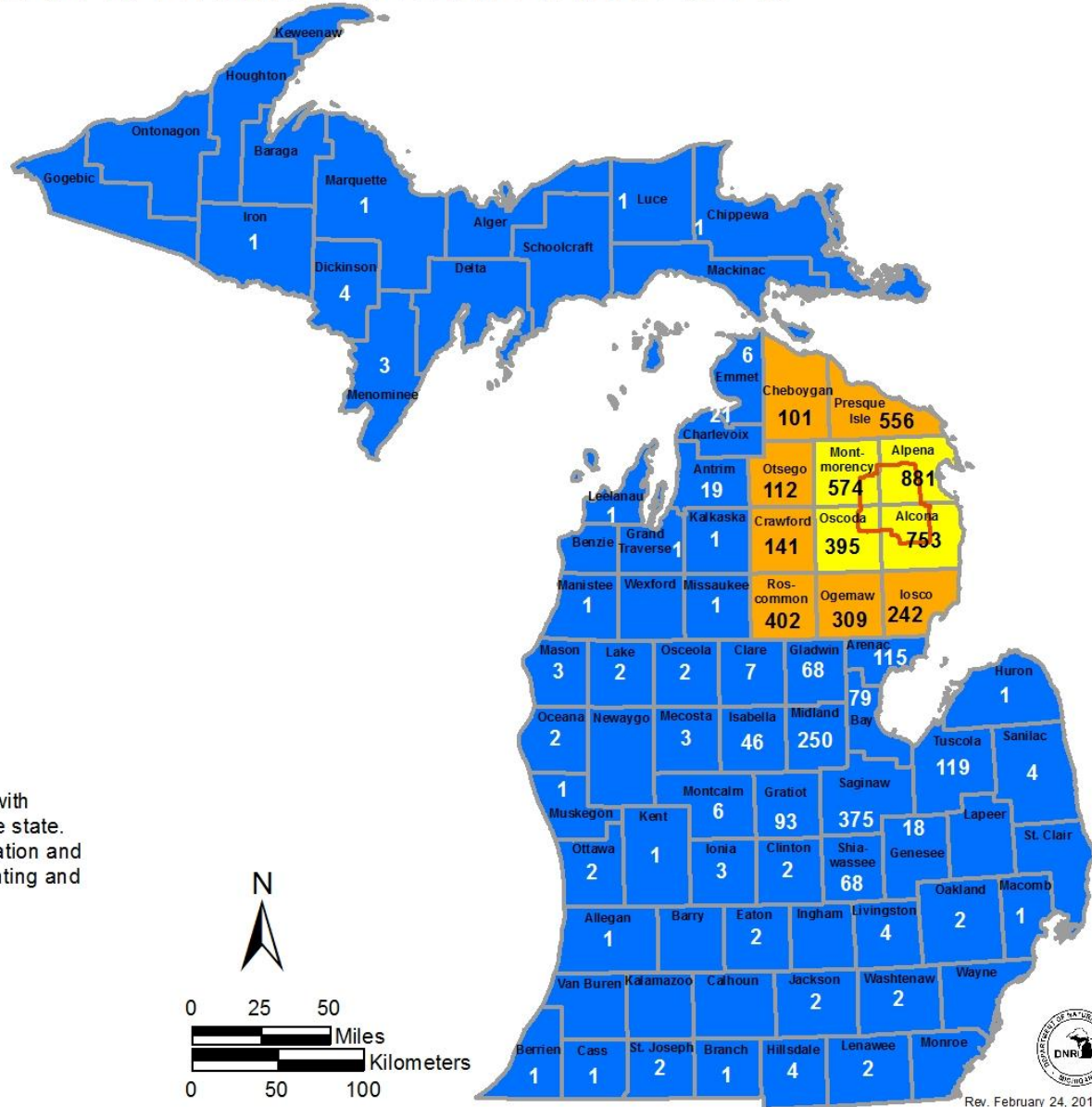
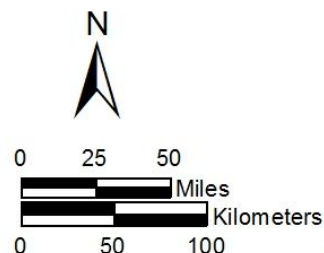
I. ACTIVE SURVEILLANCE

(Hunters voluntarily submit
heads for examination)

ZONE	Sample Goal	Samples Tested
	2,800	2,602
	1,500	1,862

II. PASSIVE SURVEILLANCE

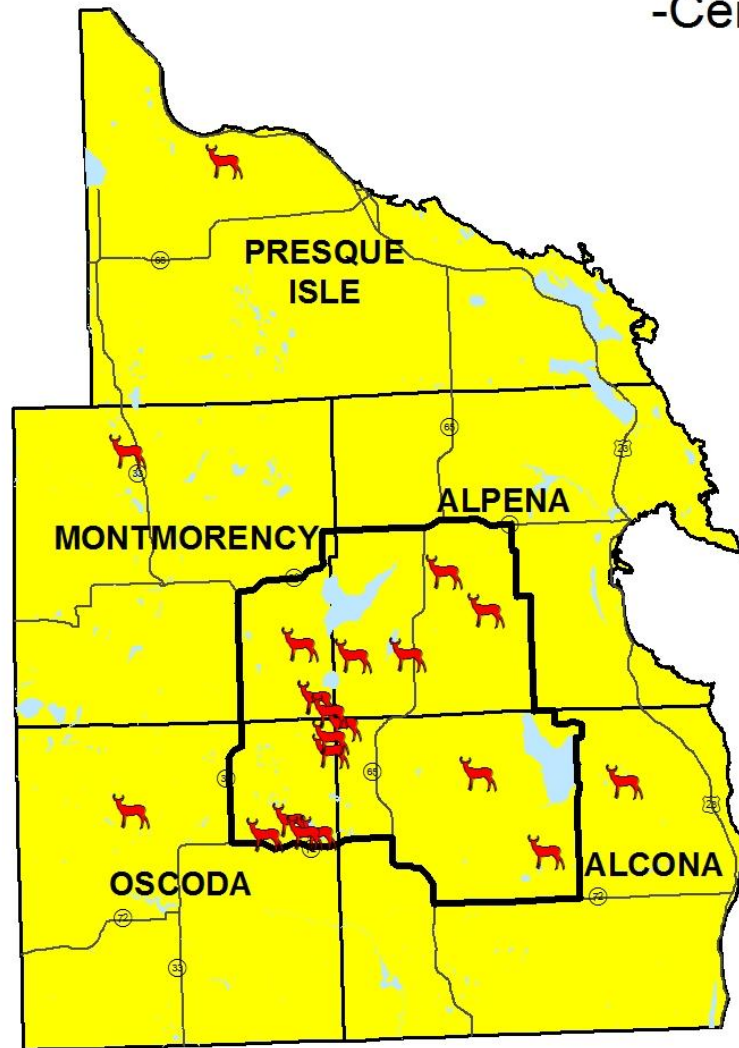
(Hunters may submit deer carcasses with
TB chest lesions from anywhere in the state.
Hunters are educated through information and
color pictures of TB lesions in the Hunting and
Trapping Guide and TB brochure.)



Rev. February 24, 2014 (MC)

Rev. January 23, 2014 (MC)

2013 Bovine Tuberculosis Survey Results -Cervids-

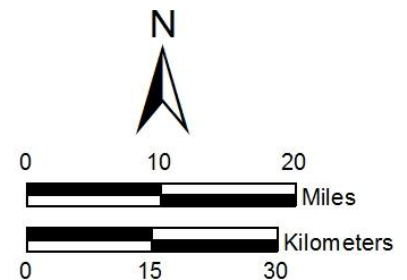


Legend

- TB Positive Deer
- DMU 452
- County Line
- Water
- Highway
- County with Positive Deer 1975-2013

Total Positive Deer

21



February 4, 2014 (MC)

Bovine TB Eradication Strategies

Strategy 1

- Keep deer from concentrating by eliminating supplemental feeding and baiting

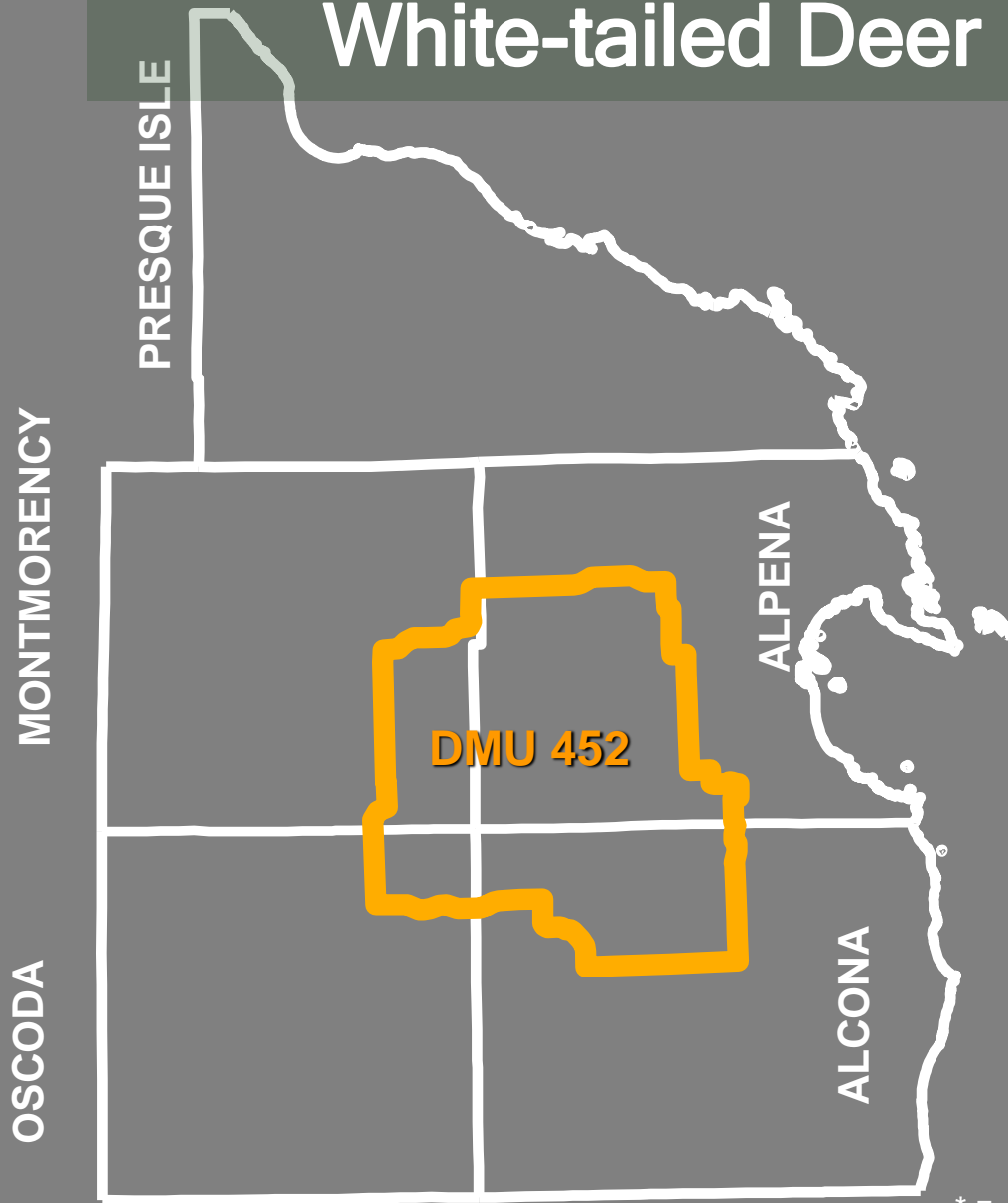


Strategy 2

- Reduce deer numbers through hunting to a level supported by the natural vegetation.



Apparent TB Prevalence in White-tailed Deer



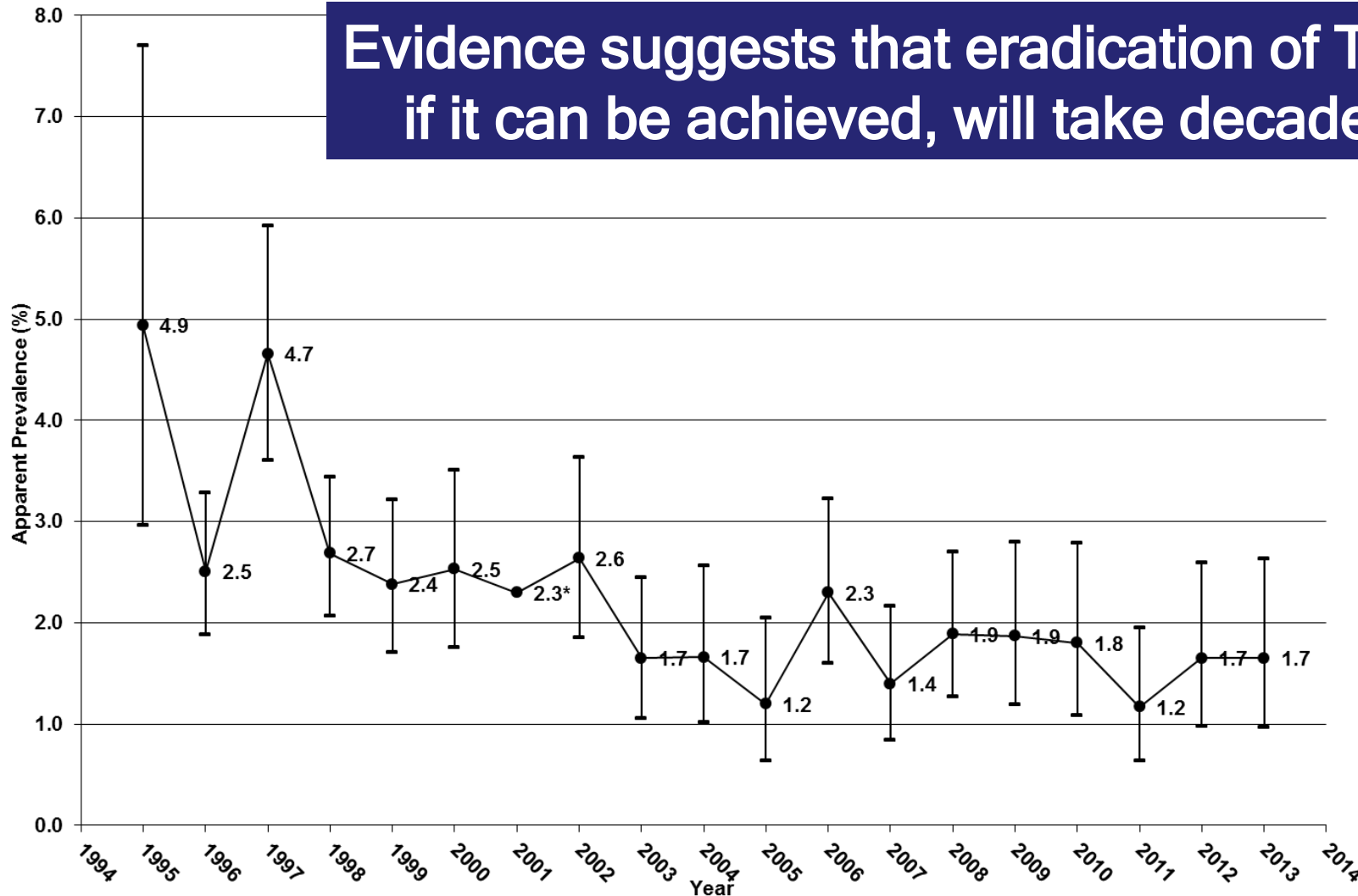
Year	Inside DMU452	5-County Outside DMU452
1995	4.9%	(no testing)
1996	2.5%	0.2%
1997	4.7%	0.4%
1998	2.7%	0.3%
1999	2.4%	0.2%
2000	2.5%	0.4%
2001	2.3%*	0.5%
2002	2.6%	0.5%
2003	1.7%	0.2%
2004	1.7%	0.2%
2005	1.2%	0.1%
2006	2.3%	0.3%
2007	1.4%	0.2%
2008	1.9%	0.3%
2009	1.9%	0.4%
2010	1.8%	0.2%
2011	1.2%	0.1%
2012	1.7%	0.3%
2013	1.7%	0.2%

* Extrapolated from head-only apparent prevalence; Mandatory head testing.

Apparent Prevalence of Bovine Tuberculosis (\approx /95% Confid. Limits), Adult White-tailed Deer, DMU 452, 1995-2013

(Cochran-Armitage test for trend, two-tailed, $p < 0.0001$)

Evidence suggests that eradication of TB, if it can be achieved, will take decades.



Are we better off today than when we started our TB Management Strategies in 1995?

1. Bovine TB has been reduced from 4.9% in 1995 to 1.7% in 2013 - a 65% decrease.
2. No evidence that bovine TB is spreading or building up outside the 5-county TB Area - no positives since 2010.
3. Bovine TB has not become established in our elk herd.
4. No evidence that Bovine TB has become established in any wildlife species other than deer.
5. Fewer cattle herds becoming infected – 1-3 per year.

Conclusion: “Stay the Course”

Because, if we roll back our management of TB, we can expect to see a decline in these positive effects.



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases



Michigan's Bovine Tuberculosis Program

Dr. Richard W. Smith

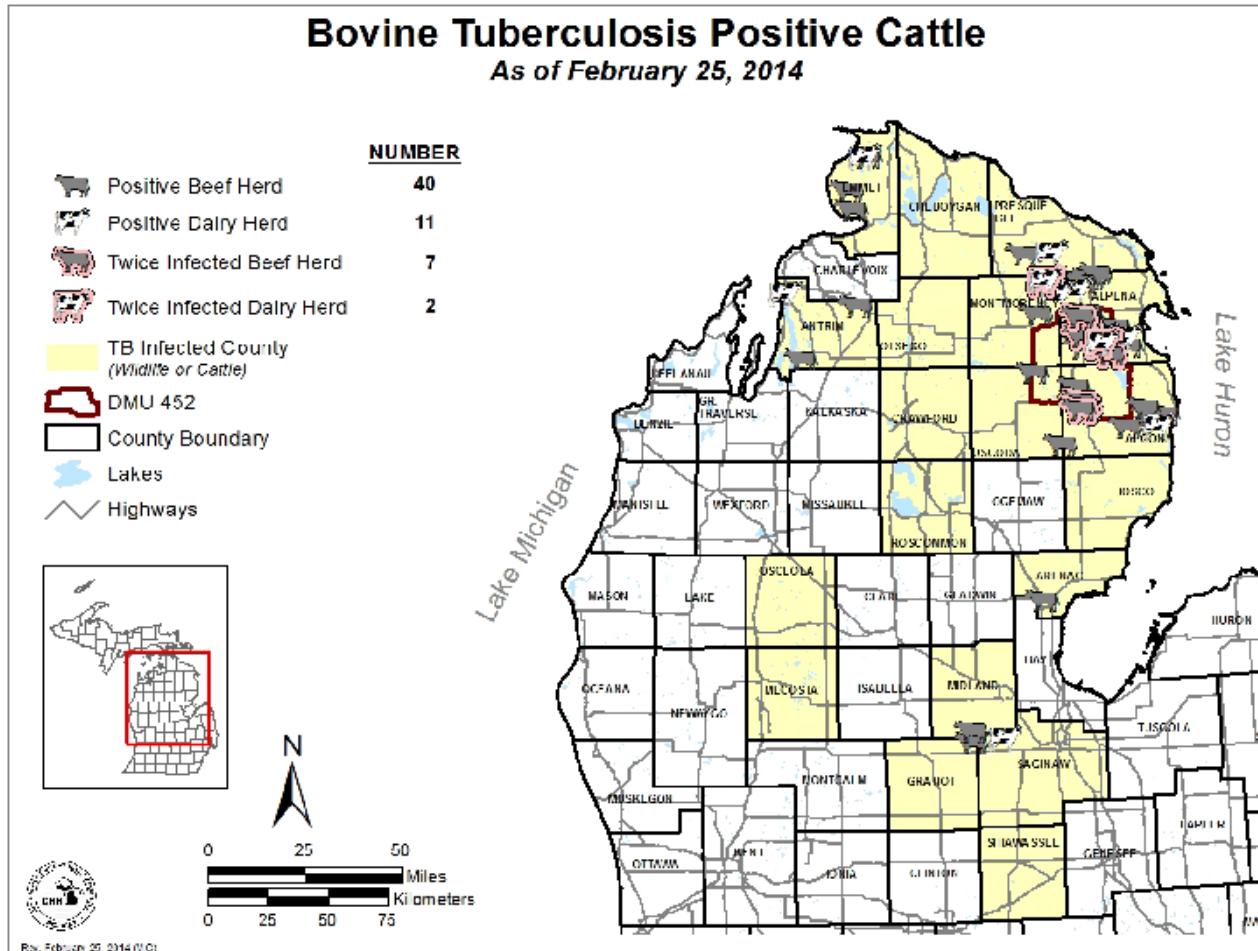
Assistant State Veterinarian over Ruminant Programs

Bovine TB Program Coordinator



2013 Infected Herds

4 TB Infected Herds & 1 Infected Feedlot



Saginaw Situation

- To date the Gratiot County, Midland County herds and the Arenac County feedlot all tied to Saginaw dairy herd infection.
- Waiting for genome study from Huron County feedlot to see if it is tied to Saginaw infection – results in early April
- 83 of the 230 herds traced needed to TB test - 14,994 head of cattle TB tested.

How Saginaw Herd Infection Happen

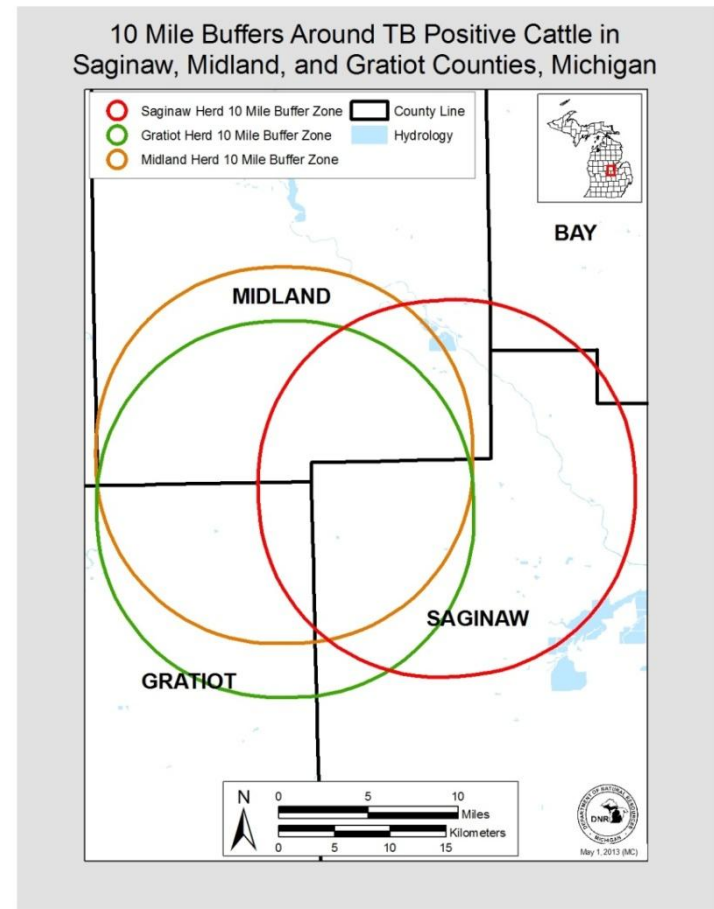
- Trace investigation found that Saginaw herd last purchased milking cows in mid-90s.
- Three different source herds that had provided the Saginaw herd with bulls were TB tested - **6,085** head of cattle were negative.
- Most likely source of infection was from a cow purchased in mid-90s, perhaps from dispersal sale in TB zone.

How Other Herd Infections Happen

- **Gratiot infection** - infection introduced from feeding infected unpasteurized milk from Saginaw dairy.
- **Midland infection** - infected animal originated from Saginaw dairy.
- **Arenac infection** - infection introduced by feeding unpasteurized milk from Saginaw dairy at Gratiot farm in 2012.

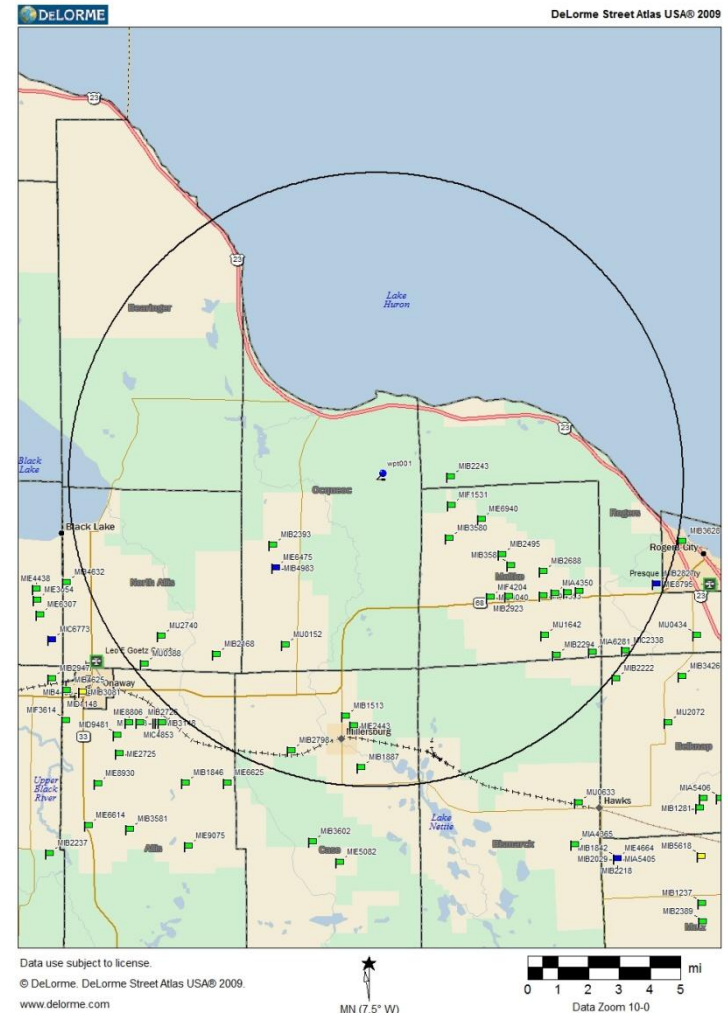
2013 Circle Testing

- Completed 10 mile circles in Saginaw, Gratiot, and Midland Counties
- 100 farms with 10,799 head of cattle tested
- Arenac 3 mile circle in progress
- No evidence of disease



2014 Circle Testing

- Presque Isle – Cheboygan Counties
 - 38 herds to test
- Huron County
 - Will wait to for genome study in early April to determine circle size



Questions?

Surveys to measure support for antler-point restrictions (APRs) in two areas in the Lower Peninsula



Brian Frawley
Wildlife Division
March 13, 2014



Objective of APRs

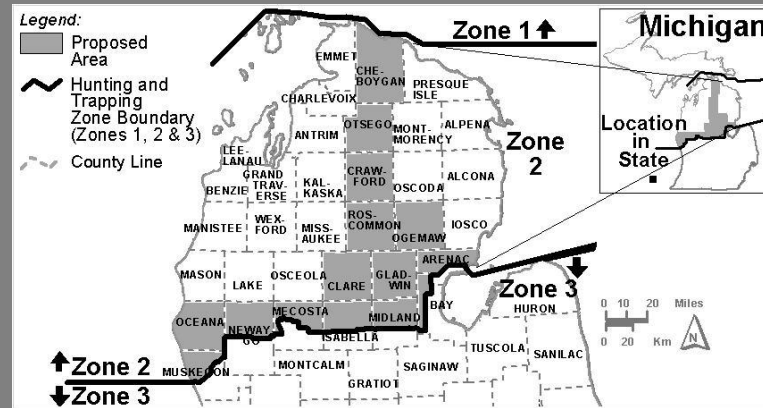
- Protect a portion of yearling bucks from harvest and allow them to become older.



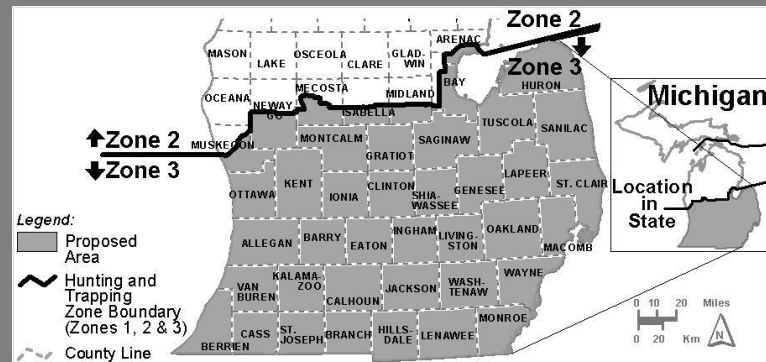
APR Proposals

- Two proposals submitted by the Lower Peninsula – Deer Management Initiative.

- North-central LP



- Southern LP



APR Proposal in North-central LP

- All bucks must have at least three points on one antler. A second buck must have at least four points.
- Exempt mentored youth hunters, apprentice hunters, and youth hunters participating in the Liberty Hunt.
- APRs would be in place for five years.



APR Proposal in Southern LP

- All bucks taken (first or second buck) must have at least four points on one antler.
- Exempt mentored youth hunters, apprentice hunters, and youth hunters participating in the Liberty Hunt.
- APRs would be in place for five years.



APR Evaluation Process

- Process developed jointly by the DNR and an APR workgroup made up of representatives from several organizations and several members of the deer hunting community.



APR Evaluation Process

- At least 66% of hunters in the affected area must support mandatory APRs.
- Endorsed a scientifically designed survey to evaluate support for APR.



Point-of-Sales (POS) Surveys Considered but Rejected.

- POS survey would complicate and prolong the sale of hunting licenses.
- POS survey would not be targeted.
- Rely upon personnel at the vendor's business to administer the survey. Thus, the DNR could not guarantee the survey was administered properly.
- Many vendors would object because they would be forced to administer surveys at their expense and at the inconvenience of their customers.



Probability Sampling

- A probability sample is a sample selected in such a way that each person in the population being studied has a known likelihood of being included in the sample.
- The results can be reliably projected from the sample to the larger population.



Survey Process

- Randomly selected sample.
- Sent a cover letter with an enclosed questionnaire and postage-paid return envelope via first-class mail.
- Initial mailing was followed by two additional questionnaires to nonrespondents.



Survey Questions

1. Do you hunt deer in the area to be affected by these proposed regulations?	Yes	No
2. Do you own at least 5 acres of land in the area affected by the proposed regulations?	Yes	No
3. Do you farm in the area affected by the proposed regulations? (<i>A farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year.</i>)	Yes	No
4. Do you support the antler-point restriction proposal?	Yes	No



Survey Process

- The percentage of support was measured by dividing the number of “yes” responses by the sum of those responses indicating “yes” or “no.”
- At least 50% of people receiving the survey had to reply in order to accept the results of the survey.



Survey Results

Table 1. The estimated number of hunters in the area affected by proposed APRs, and the number of hunters selected to receive an APR survey.

Area	Total number of hunters ^a	Number of people included in sample ^a	Number of questionnaires that were undeliverable	Number of questionnaires returned	Response rate (%) ^b
North-central LP	100,000	3,000	11	2,167	72
Southern LP	340,006	2,300	17	1,700	74

^aEstimated number of people that hunted deer in area during 2012 (Frawley 2013).

^bSample size adjusted for undeliverable questionnaires when calculating response rate.



Survey Results

Table 2. Proportion of hunters supporting or opposing proposed antler point restrictions.

Area	Group	Yes (Supported mandatory APR regulations)		No (Did not support mandatory APR regulations)	
		% ^a	95% CL ^b	% ^a	95% CL ^b
North-central LP	Hunters	61.7	2.2	38.3	2.2
	Hunters that own at least 5 acres ^c	62.2	3.2	37.8	3.2
	Hunters that farmed ^{c,d}	60.4	6.9	39.6	6.9
Southern LP	Hunters	54.9	2.5	45.1	2.5
	Hunters that own at least 5 acres ^c	57.4	3.6	42.6	3.6
	Hunters that farmed ^{c,d}	56.6	5.9	43.4	5.9

^aPercentage of hunters; hunters that failed to provide an answer (<1%) were not used to measure support for mandatory APR regulations.

^b95% confidence limits.

^cSubset of hunters.

^dA farm is defined as any place from which \$1,000 or more of agricultural products were produced and sold, or normally would have been sold, during the year.



Conclusions

- Support from hunters was insufficient (<66%) to recommend implementation of antler point restrictions in either of the areas.



Thank You

www.michigan.gov/dnr



2012 Deer Hunter Opinion Survey



Objectives

- Estimate importance of deer hunting.
- Quantify hunter activity during the past three years.
- Determine deer hunters' opinions on various hunting regulations.



Methods

- 5,697 randomly selected 2012 deer hunting license buyers sent survey.
- Questionnaires mailed in mid-February 2013. Up to two follow-up mailings sent to non-respondents.
- 58% response rate.

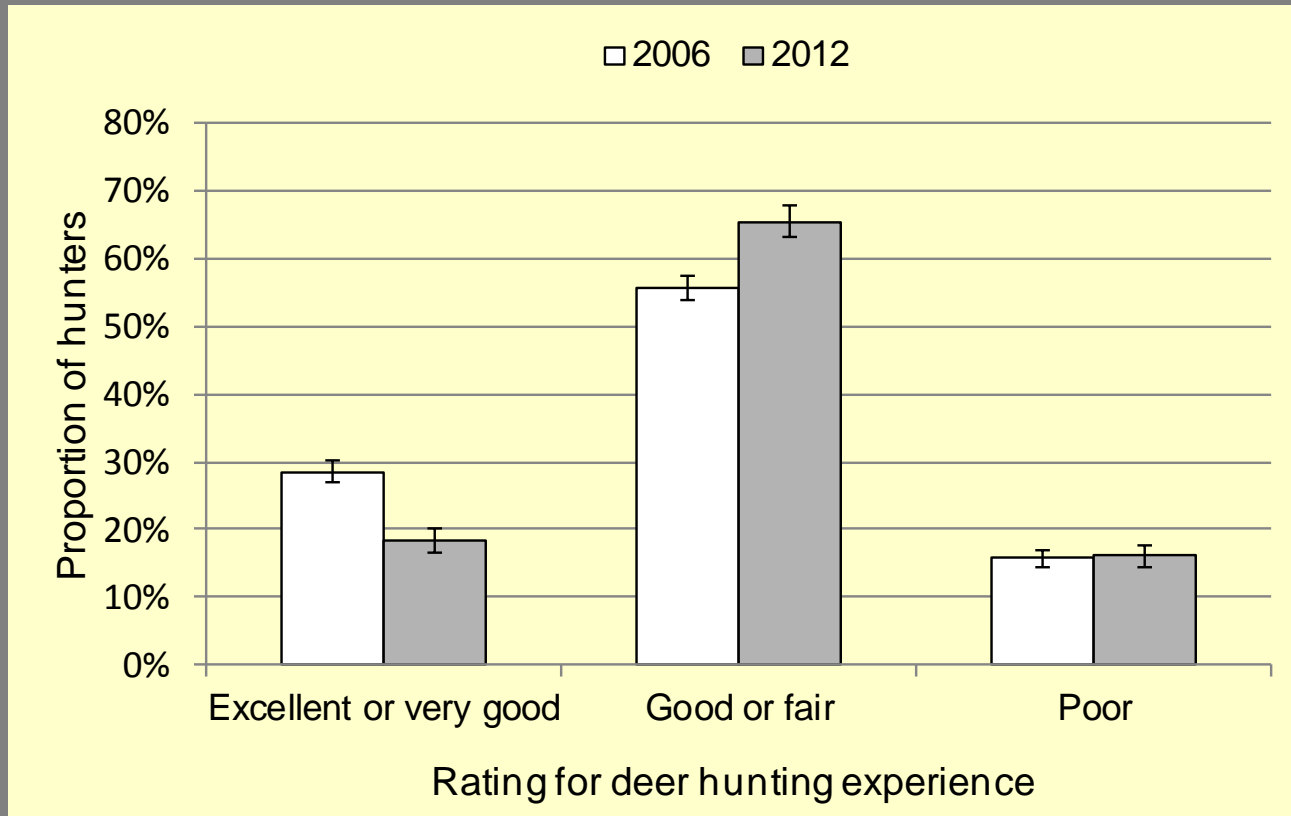


Results

- 86% of license buyers indicated hunting deer was an important recreational activity.
- 99% of the license buyers had hunted deer during the past three years (667,995 hunters).



Deer Hunter Satisfaction



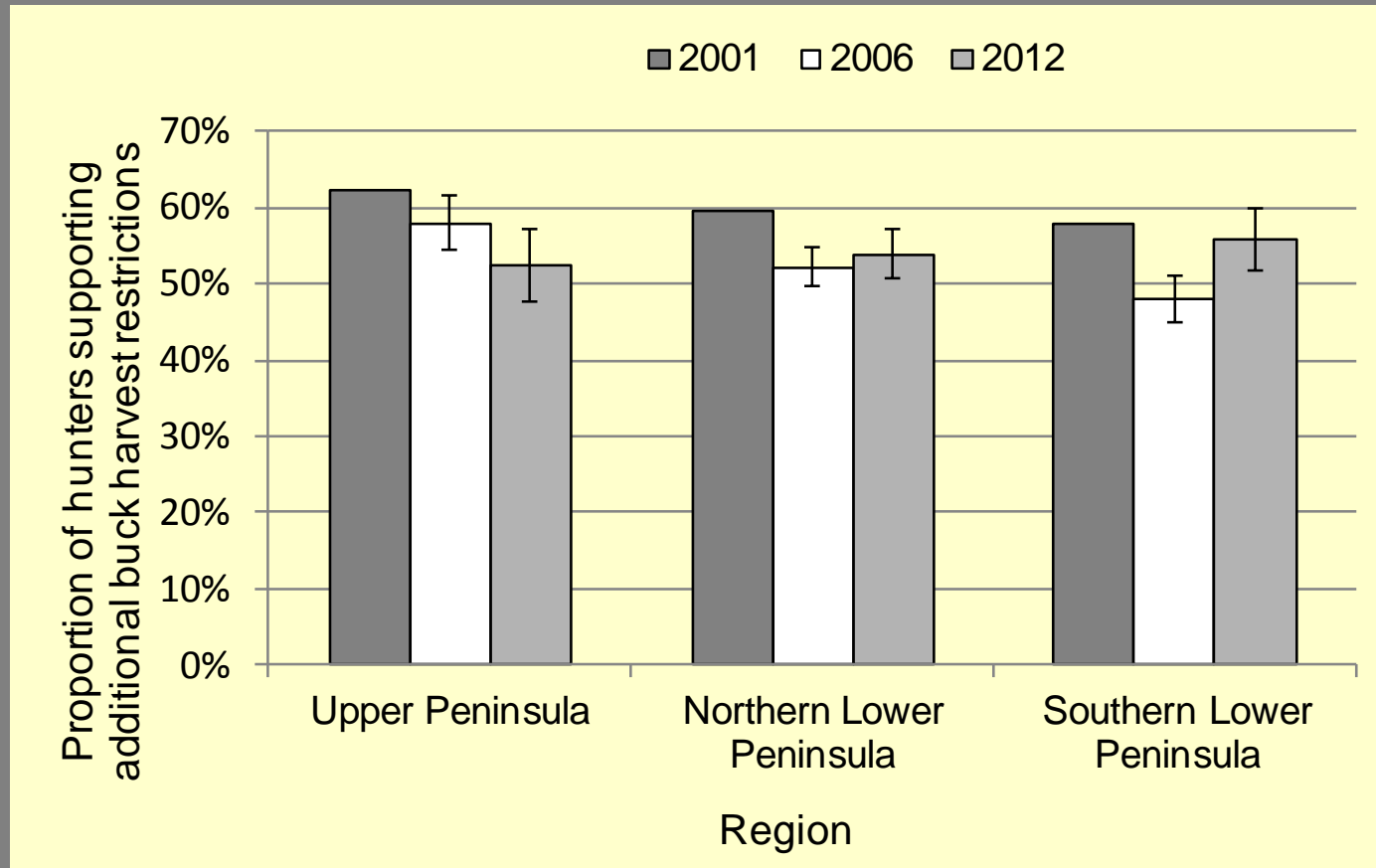
Preface to Questions About Buck Harvest Regulations

Michigan has a long tradition of allowing anyone who wishes to hunt bucks to purchase a deer hunting license (unlimited buck hunting participation). Legal bucks have been defined as a deer with at least one antler three or more inches in length. In recent years, hunters could harvest two bucks in any combination of seasons if one buck had at least 4 antler points on one side. Each year, 5% or less of Michigan deer hunters takes 2 bucks.



Support for Additional Restrictions on Buck Harvest

- Most deer hunters in the UP (52%), NLP (54%), and SLP (56%) supported additional restrictions on buck harvest.



Support for Existing Restrictions

Proportion of deer hunters that supported existing buck harvest restrictions.

(Allow hunters to take a total of two bucks in any combination of seasons if one of those bucks has at least 4 antler points on one antler.)

Restriction and region	Level of support					
	Strongly support or support		Oppose or strongly oppose		Not sure	
	%	95% CL	%	95% CL	%	95% CL
UP	60	5	37	4	3	2
NLP	69	3	27	3	5	1
SLP	66	4	31	4	3	1
Statewide	67	2	30	2	4	1



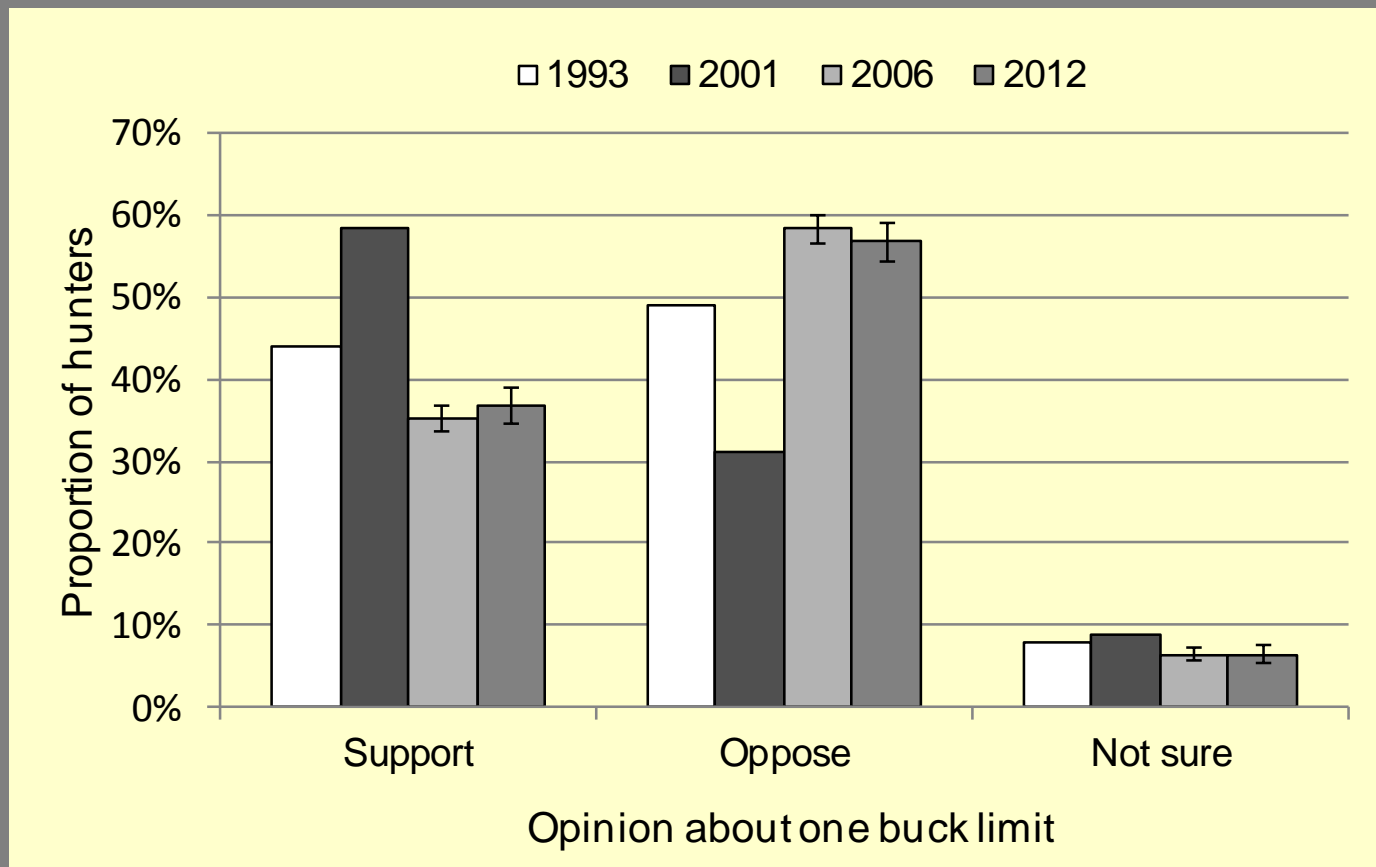
Support for Regional APRs

Proportion of deer hunters that supported regional APRs. (Allow hunters to take a total of two bucks in any combination of seasons, but require regional minimum antler point restrictions. In the UP, one buck 2 or more points on one side, the other 4 or more points on one side. In the NLP, one buck 3 or more points on one side, the other 4 or more points on one side. In the SLP both bucks 4 or more points on one side.)

Restriction and region	Level of support					
	Strongly support or support		Oppose or strongly oppose		Not sure	
	%	95% CL	%	95% CL	%	95% CL
UP	53	5	41	5	6	2
NLP	46	3	45	3	9	2
SLP	45	4	46	4	9	2
Statewide	46	2	45	2	9	1



Support for One-buck Limit



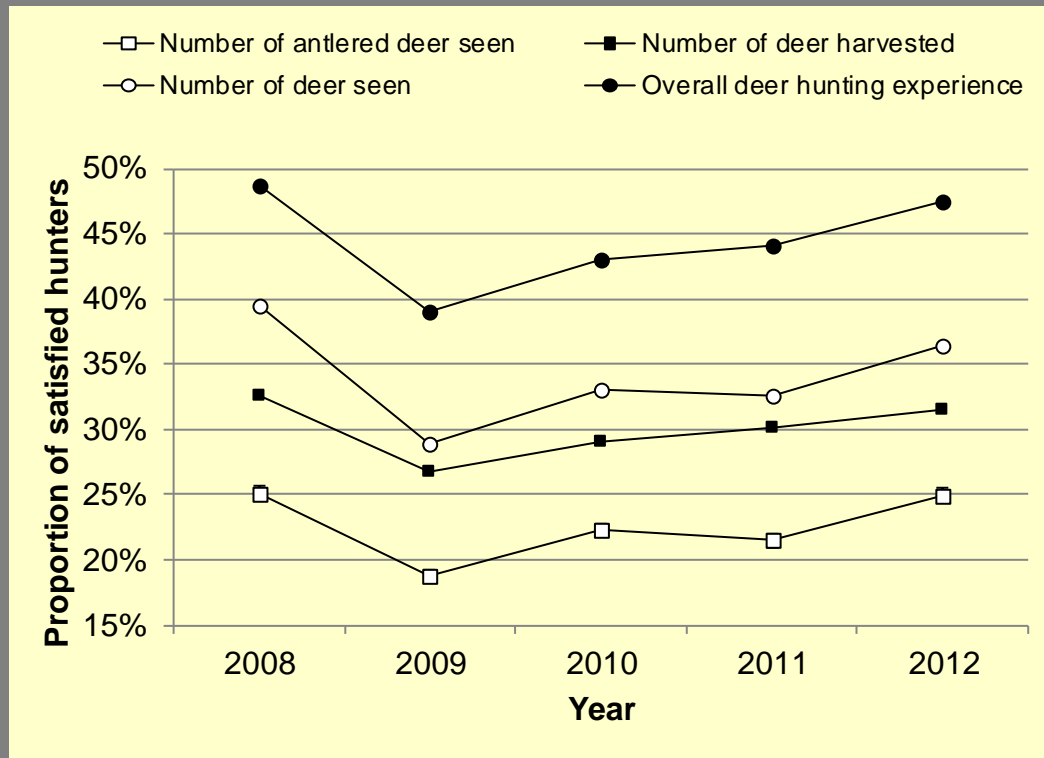
Discussion

- Most hunters in DNR surveys supported additional restrictions on buck harvest.
- MSU study reported 70% of deer hunters believed there were too few mature bucks for harvest, and 55% of hunters indicated the DNR should try to produce more mature bucks.



Discussion

- Less than 50% of hunters have been satisfied by their overall hunting experience each year, and less than 25% of hunters have been satisfied by the number of antlered deer seen during the past hunting season.



Discussion

- Although most deer hunters favored additional buck harvest restrictions, none of the buck harvest restrictions evaluated received higher support than the existing regulations.
- Additional discussions with deer hunters and other stakeholders are needed to determine what tradeoffs are acceptable.



Survey Comparison

APR Surveys	Deer Hunter Survey
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Area-specific	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Statewide and regional
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exempt youth and apprentice hunters	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No exemptions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Five year experiment	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No timeframe
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes or No	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strongly support, support, oppose, strongly oppose, or not sure
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• APRs were requested to protect a portion of yearling bucks from harvest and allow them to become older	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• APR question asked after stating 5% or less of hunters take two bucks; does not provide any further rationale for APRs



Broader APR Evaluation

- “Hunter’s Choice”
(Upper Peninsula & DMU 487)
 - 2014 – 2016 regulations: Wildlife Division evaluation
- Third-party evaluation of impacts:
 - Population impacts
 - Disease risk
 - Hunter participation
 - Hunting-related economic impacts
 - Crop & silvicultural damage



Third-Party Evaluation

- Solicitation~March – May 2014
- Review and selection~June 2014
 - One or more impacts
 - Potentially include Quality Deer Management more broadly
 - Demonstrate sufficient expertise/independence
- Report and presentation~February 2015
 - Pursue peer-reviewed outlet for consolidated report



Thank You

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